



## Proposed District Plan submission form

Clause 6 of Schedule 1, Resource Management Act 1991

Feel free to add more pages to your submission to provide a fuller response.

Form 5: Submission on Proposed Far North District Plan

TO: Far North District Council

This is a submission on the Proposed District Plan for the Far North District.

### 1. Submitter details:

Full Name:	Stephanie Lane		
Company / Organisation Name: (if applicable)	n/a		
Contact person (if different):	n/a		
Full Postal Address:	[REDACTED]		
Phone contact:	Mobile: [REDACTED]	Home:	Work:
Email (please print):	Stephanie.lane.nz@outlook.com		

2. (Please select one of the two options below)

- I **could not** gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission
- I **could** gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission

*If you could gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission, please complete point 3 below*

3. **Not Applicable**

- I ~~am~~ directly affected by an effect of the subject matter of the submission that:  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (A) Adversely affects the environment; and  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (B) Does not relate to trade competition or the effect of trade competition
- I ~~am not~~ directly affected by an effect of the subject matter of the submission that:  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (A) Adversely affects the environment; and  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (B) Does not relate to trade competition or the effect of trade competition

*Note: if you are a person who could gain advantage in trade competition through the submission, your right to make a submission may be limited by clause 6(4) of Part 1 of Schedule 1 of the Resource Management Act 1991*



**The specific provisions of the Plan that my submission relates to are:**

This is a huge Plan and as an individual, I do not have the time to work through it all myself. As such, I have only focussed on those aspects related to dogs, as the FNDC's actions in this field are of enormous concern to me, and I am relying on the below from The Bay of Islands Watchdogs:

**The specific provisions of the Plan that our submission relates to are, as far as we can tell, listed below:**

Any objectives, sections, policies, rules, regulations, practice notes, and supporting documentation which relates to **wellbeing, dog owners, dogs, the banning of dogs (via resource consent conditions, covenants or consent notices), the impact of dogs on the environment, kennels, sub-divisions, dogs and their relationship with native flora and fauna, significant natural areas, zoning which limits dog ownership, and dog limits placed on Significant Natural Areas (SNAs).**

**S468.001**

This includes but is not limited to:

- Not currently in the documentation, but critical for review: the 'Practice Note For Significant Indigenous Flora and Fauna' and the 'Bay of Islands Kiwi Distribution Map Support Document'. Part 2, District Wide Matters, Strategic Direction, Economic, and social wellbeing: all social prosperity objectives, and Natural Environment: SDEP06.
- Any section which mentions pets, and/or pests (where dogs have been named pests).
- Any sections which state the aim is to "Encourage and support active management of pest plants and animals" or "Require landowners to manage pets and pest species to avoid risks to threatened indigenous species."
- Subdivision section, SUB-R3, CON-2.
- IB-02: Indigenous biodiversity is managed to maintain its extent and diversity in a way that provides for the social, economic and cultural well-being of people and communities.
- IB-P7: Encourage and support active management of pest plants and pest animals.
- IB-P9: Require landowners to manage pets and pest species, including dogs, cats, possums, rats and mustelids, to avoid risks to threatened indigenous species, including avoiding the introduction of pets and pest species into kiwi present or high-density kiwi areas.
- IB-P10 and all subsections: Manage land use and subdivision to address the effects of the activity requiring resource consent for indigenous vegetation clearance and associated land disturbance, including (but not limited to) consideration of the following matters where relevant to the application: (including all clauses).
- Part 3, Appendices - APP3 – Subdivision management plan criteria, including (i) measures to protect, manage and enhance indigenous vegetation and habitats, ONL and ONF, heritage resources and riparian margins, including appropriate means of controlling dogs, cats, rats, mustelids and other animal pests and the means of controlling pest plants.

Recent FNDC decisions on consenting issues confirmed the District Plan provisions are being over-ridden by practise notes, but those practise notes, and their impact on this District Plan, have not been disclosed. We are unable to assess the affect or impact of the District Plan for the District or individuals because neither of these two critical documents have been provided. I thus ask that the elected council review two documents that were not included in the documents for consultation:

- The 'Practice Note for Significant Indigenous Flora and Fauna',
- The 'Bay of Islands Kiwi Distribution Map – Support Document'

Confirm your position:     Support     Support In-part     Oppose  
(please tick relevant box)



**My submission is:**

I am a member of the Bay of Islands Watchdogs and I support their submissions and their recommendations. **S468.002**

I am hopeful that our newly elected Council will mark a watershed in terms of how FNDC chooses to act towards residents who have dogs; we comprise up to half of this district.

Our dogs are our family members, best friends, counsellors, workmates. I do not accept that FNDC has a right to ban and restrict me and my family from sharing my life with my animals responsibly, anywhere in Northland.

**In addition to the information below, I would like to speak to the elected Council about my personal experience as a dog owner, about FNDC's dog bans and restrictions, and the impact this has had on me and my family.**

FNDC management's choices to ban and restrict dog owners for two decades indicates that they have not considered the unintended consequences of their actions.

Those consequences include:

- negative economic impacts on our rohe in terms of housing and worker availability,
- humanitarian and mental health crises with people having to relinquish pets,
- animal rescue services and pounds being overwhelmed with dogs, and financially stressed
- animal rescue services being unable to find land which is suitably zoned for them to base their operations,
- fewer children living in homes which have dogs, which means they will increase their risk of harm from dogs because they will not learn how to care for, respect, and control their dogs,
- increase in the number of dogs being dumped in the bush due to lack of available rentals, which has a potentially serious impact on native wildlife,
- negative impact on real estate agents and developers, by reducing their potential buyer/tenant markets, even when they offer FNDC multiple means by which potential owners could control dogs effectively in high density kiwi areas (e.g. fencing, registration, micro-chipping, and de-sexing requirements),
- reduction in tourism from family members who own dogs deciding not to travel North, as their parents live in areas where their dogs are not allowed,
- reduction in tourism from dog-owners who are sight-seeing, as Northland's reputation for anti-dog attitudes grows,
- less positive view of our district as a retirement area,
- legal implications for FNDC should the community decide to challenge these restrictions/bans,
- further decrease in (already fragile) trust between FNDC management and around half the community, who own dogs,
- decrease in trust between dog owners and DOC, which in turn makes us wary of their advice about dogs and wildlife,
- lessened participation in local democracies, as residents give up trying to engage with a council they believe is just not listening,
- creation of a false and destructive division between environmentalists and bird lovers, versus dog lovers, in our local communities which did not previously exist (we are all animal lovers, in the end), and
- increasing anger from dog lovers about kiwi release programmes, which are seen as impinging on our right to live in more and more townships.



There are additional issues which have had a critical impact on trust between council management and the dog-loving community. These are detailed in the BOI Watchdog submission and need to be addressed urgently; they include:

- anger and fear among women about the lack of attention paid to sexual harassment complaints in the animal management department,
- poor quality applicants for jobs in animal management and district services, particularly from women, as the reputed toxicity and misogyny in that department becomes even more widely known,
- anger at the amount of time spent in consultation processes, that do not lead to substantive change,
- frustration at the adversarial, rather than collaborative, nature of FNDC management,
- anger at disrespect towards cultural considerations,
- a belief that FNDC management might 'hide' or obfuscate policies and documents which could have a serious impact on our dogs and lives,
- a belief that FNDC management wants Northland to become a kiwi haven, where there are no dogs or cats permitted – a huge, flightless bird aviary,
- increase in perception that FNDC has worse planning rules for residents, and easier rules for FNDC's own projects and properties, and
- increasing disrespect for and lack of trust in the FNDC legal department's advice in relation to bylaws, dogs, and dog restrictions.

**On A Personal Level:**

- I have lived in Northland for almost six years. I have been shocked and saddened by the anti-dog (and anti-cat) sentiment up here.
- I am an ex-veterinarian
- I have lived with dogs for my entire 50 years
- I foster for the Bay of Islands Animal Rescue
- I have been camper-vanning for the past year and a half
- I have been involved in animal rights and rescue for three decades
- I am an environmentalist
- I aim to protect the rights and welfare of all animals, both "owned" and wild. I also do my best on a personal level to protect our native flora and fauna.
- My extended family runs a local tourism business

I give this resume purely to show that I have extensive experience with dogs and with the effects of Northland's dog policies.

- Dogs are incredibly important to me, and to many like me. They are our main comfort and company.

- **Walking and Health**

For six years I have lived just a few minutes from Rainbow Falls and love bush walks but I have never done this walk, or the others in the area, as my dogs can't come. On leash, they are no threat to kiwi or other wildlife. But the exercise they, and I, would receive would be beneficial to us all.



Exercised happy dogs are well-behaved dogs.

Exercised happy humans are less burden on our over-burdened health and mental health systems.

- **Animal Welfare**

As a vet and animal rescue volunteer, I have first-hand experience of the state of animal welfare in Northland. It is abhorrent. There is a culture up here, particularly in small towns, of using, abusing and neglecting dogs. As long as our council is generating the idea that dogs are pests and worthless, this will not change.

- **Domestic Violence**

Its well documented that violence against animals leads to violence against people. I'd suggest it goes in the opposite direction also.

Northland has terrible statistics of family violence and of animal abuse.

Animals can teach kindness, compassion and responsibility. Removing animals from the homes of children, our next generation, starves them of that essential learning and this will negatively impact everyone in our community.

- **Rental Accommodation**

I was horrified to learn that the FNDC websites actively discourages landlords renting to families with animals. This leads to:

- More homeless animals
- More homeless people
- More strain on our rescue organisations
- Less learning empathy and compassion – leading to more crime and violence
- Increased mental health issues

FNDC has no right to issue such advice. I ask it to be removed immediately.

Additionally, people who responsibly care for animals are more likely to responsibly care for their rented homes. They're also more likely to behave well so they are able to stay in their home. Very short-sighted to advise against it.

- There is such **mistrust of the council** among many of our communities.

I recently volunteered at a BOIAR vax and chip day. Many of the attendees on the day, all Maori, wanted their dogs vaccinated, de-wormed and de-flead, but declined to have them microchipped for fear of the council tracing them.

Some were resistant to having their dogs desexed, and many of these dogs were malnourished and cross-breeds and shouldn't have been breeding.

Some were amenable to it when given financial help. These animals are not being cared for, their unwanted babies are being killed (yes, they were open about it).

- **Mandatory desexing** is essential. It is the only way to prevent this animal suffering and the burden on our animal rescues, and indeed on our Animal Control facilities.

- **Tourism**



- I'm on several motor-homing Facebook pages. I actively discourage those with dogs from visiting Northland as it is so dog-unfriendly. I've seen others do the same.

- Northland's economy is reliant on tourism but people are avoiding it because they cannot bring their travel companions with them. Or if they do, they cannot enjoy the natural beauty of the region because they cannot leave their animals unattended in locked vehicles.

They're spending their money in other regions instead.

- When in my camper alone, having my dog with me offers me security and protection. Yet, in Northland, there are very few places I can camp. Even less places I can walk.

- For example, I visited Ruapekapeka about a year ago. This is a truly amazing place and I was in awe. But there is an outright ban on dogs.

There is a walkway path, in open ground, perfect for dogs on leash. Why? It makes no sense.

I do agree with banning them in the tunnels and dugout area – dogs could genuinely destroy that impressive historic site. But that is one of the very few areas I've seen where there is a genuine reason to ban dogs on leash.

When travelling with your dog companion, apart from wanting them to have the enrichment of the activity and to enjoy their company, you can't always leave them in a hot car, especially with the current risk of the rampant theft of dogs.

Surely it would be better to have tourists here, spending their money, and allow their dogs to walk on leash.

- **Hypocrisy**

Council does not follow its own rules. It does not require of itself what it requires of its people.

Says it needs to ban dogs and cats to protect kiwi, while council:

- allows new subdivisions that encroach on kiwi habitat
- leaves private groups and individuals to trap rats, stoats, mice, etc
- ignores the rampant spread of noxious plants such as Taiwanese Cherry and tobacco weed, which out-compete natives, while claiming it cares about native flora and fauna

There are more important and more significant impacts on kiwi than dogs and cats, and dogs can be managed into not creating an impact. I think dogs are just the low hanging fruit that council can use for its own agenda and to greenwash its ineffectiveness in protecting our native bush.

Northland has a reputation now for its anti-dog attitude. It is putting people off from living here and visiting here. I personally will probably move at some stage to somewhere more dog friendly if nothing changes.

The rules are without substance. There needs to be more emphasis on living well together than arbitrary banning of dogs. This would benefit everyone.




<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>YES I wish to be heard in support of my submission</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <del>I do not wish to be heard in support of my submission</del> <i>(Please tick relevant box)</i>
If others make a similar submission, I will consider presenting a joint case with them at a hearing <input type="checkbox"/> <del>Yes</del> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b>
Do you wish to present your submission via Microsoft Teams? <input type="checkbox"/> <del>Yes</del> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b>
<b>Signature of submitter:</b> <i>(or person authorised to sign on behalf of submitter)</i>  S Lane  <b>Date: 21.10.22</b>  <i>(A signature is not required if you are making your submission by electronic means)</i>

**Important information:**

1. The Council must receive this submission before the closing date and time for submissions (5pm 21 October 2022)
2. Please note that submissions, including your name and contact details are treated as public documents and will be made available on council's website. Your submission will only be used for the purpose of the District Plan Review.
3. Submitters who indicate they wish to speak at the hearing will be emailed a copy of the planning officers report (please ensure you include an email address on this submission form).

**Send your submission to:**

**Post to:** Proposed District Plan  
Strategic Planning and Policy, Far North District Council  
Far North District Council,  
Private Bag 752  
KAIKOHE 0400

**Email to:** [pdp@fndc.govt.nz](mailto:pdp@fndc.govt.nz)

**Or you can also deliver this submission form to any Far North District Council service centre or library, from 8am – 5pm Monday to Friday.**

**Submissions close 5pm, 21 October 2022**

**Please refer to [pdp.fndc.govt.nz](http://pdp.fndc.govt.nz) for further information and updates.**

**Please note that original documents will not be returned. Please retain copies for your file.**

**Note to person making submission**

Please note that your submission (or part of your submission) may be struck out if the authority is satisfied that at least one of the following applies to the submission (or part of the submission):

- It is frivolous or vexatious
- It discloses no reasonable or relevant case
- It would be an abuse of the hearing process to allow the submission (or the part) to be taken further
- It contains offensive language
- It is supported only by material that purports to be independent expert evidence but has been prepared by a person who is not independent or who does not have sufficient specialised knowledge or skill to give expert advice on the matter.



**SUBMISSION NO**

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